SANDHILLS SENTINEL

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In 1976 I had the opportunity to tour the National Gallery. I saw many world renown works of art. However, I can honestly say that I did not see a display of talent that was any more remarkable than Ramiro Flores' drawing which adorns the cover of this issue. We want to thank Ramiro for his outstanding contribution and ask that he bless us with contributions for future issues. He is truly a gifted individual.

We do not have the space to print all of the letters we received from our readers. The postal employee who delivers our mail said that we were receiving so many letters that we would be assigned our own zip code. The majority of people who responded were requesting more input from Jim Gardner (see Texas Travels in our May issue.) The strange thing was that three hundred of those letters were in the same handwriting and all were postmarked in Wickett, Texas. (Jim's hometown.) After receiving this deluge of requests I called Jim to tell him to name his price and to send more material for our next issue. Jim's daughter said he had gone to the post office to mail a stack of letters and that she would have him return my call.

Mike Ryan

LETTERS

I enjoyed reading the Sandhills Sentinel and would like to pass on my thanks to the Sandhills team for a fine safety newsletter. I think the newsletter can be an effective way to get people involved in talking about their commitment to safety and passing on information that could be useful to others in preventing accidents. It is also an outward expression of a group's safety commitment, and helps to motivate others outside of the group to maintain the top priority emphasis on safety.

Thanks again to the Sandhills team, and I hope to see contributions from others in future articles. (It would be good to ask engineers, engineering tech's, and field supervisors to contribute also!)

Frank Kemnetz

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While the review in the Sandhills Sentinel certainly helped, it probably didn't deter the death knell of "Stokey Flat." It's highly improbable we will be around for the start of school.

Jon Pierre Stokes

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Every job or task has hidden hazards or dangers that can cause serious injuries or accidents. It behooves the person to identify and avoid any hazards or potential hazards if possible.

One way to identify any potential hazards is pre-job planning. A check list is a great tool that can be used in pre-job planning. It worked beyond my wildest dreams in the last job that I did. Boy, did it ever. The checklist below is 18 years old - but it still has universal application and can be tailor made for any job. Use it for reference.

CHECKLIST FOR NEXT JOB
APRIL 1971

1. Is flight on schedule?
2. Does airplane have back door?
3. What will the altitude be?
4. What will wind direction be?
5. Do I have a spare parachute?
6. Does it work?
7. Does main parachute work?
8. Am I demanding enough money?
9. Is money unmarked?
10. Is money container waterproof?
11. Am I wearing clean underwear?
12. Do I have extra underwear? (Just in case)
13. Is landing area safe?
14. Are there any bears?
15. Do they bite?

As you can see, a pre-job checklist will make you aware of any hidden hazards and keep you on track for a safer job. It worked for me!

D. B. Cooper

SAFETY MEETINGS

Two of our three safety meetings this quarter dealt with effective and ineffective psychological coping patterns.

In June, Carol Armstrong of the Midland Hospice Organization told us how to maintain emotional stability when addressing a loss in our lives as well as providing a bibliography for further study.

In July, Chris Newman and Don Pouge of Clearview Hospital gave us an educational insight into the disease of chemical dependency. The information presented by Chris and Don was extremely informative and provided the knowledge necessary for employees to evaluate their lifestyle and determine if they have a need for outside help and where to get it.

Bill Holtz of Standby H2S Systems, Inc. was the guest speaker in August. Bill discussed H2S safety monitors and the new O.S.H.A. rules and regulations.

If anyone has a suggestion regarding the subject of future safety meetings please submit it to the editor. His office is the front seat of vehicle number 94851.

Mike Ryan

Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from anyt intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.

J.M.Keyes

INVESTIGATION TEAM NEWS

Exxon Sandhills group's investigation committee started business in their organizational meeting by electing officers. Co-chairmen elected were Joel Cherry and Dale Jackson. Allen Salm was elected to serve as secretary. Other members of the committee are Louis DeLaCruz and Robert Dozier.

Also discussed were plans and responsibilities of the committee and how investigations and inspections should be handled.

The committee investigated and reported to the group about a near miss by one of the contractors. Next the investigation team inspected all vehicles in Sandhills Production. A total of thirteen vehicles were looked at to see if specified equipment and conditions were in place and conditions met. A few conditions were highlighted to the drivers and a copy of each person's inspection sheet was issued back to the driver of the vehicle. The committee was well received. The courteous attitude shown during the investigations were appreciated.

Members met with Robin Horne to investigate a medical first aid injury to a company mechanic. Robin Horne took the opportunity to use the accident to train the members in some of the points of investigation. Since the mechanic involved in the accident is also a co-chairman, he participated in the instruction but not the investigation as a team member. The committee reported their findings to the group and to the Midland office.

The team is planning a vehicle inspection for the Gas Plant in the near future.

Any ideas, suggestions or comments about the committee may be directed to a committee member.

Dale Jackson

BREATHING AIR EQUIPMENT

Recently, during one of our breathing air equipment inspections we found that a few of our bottles had leaks around the threads, through the valves and one had a pinhole in the bottle. We found one hose that leaked. When we talked with our Scott air pack representative we found that Scott has had similar problems, some of which are under warranty. The monthly inspection gives us the opportunity to repair or replace faulty equipment. If you wait until you are in an actual emergency situation to test your equipment, it could possibly cost you your life, as well as that of your co-workers.

Lew Weeden

To be happy (reducing the thing to its elementals) I must be:
1. Well fed, unhounded by sordid cares, at ease in Zion.
2. Full of a comfortable feeling of superiority to the masses of my fellowmen.
3. Delicately and unceasingly amused according to my taste.

H. L. Mencken

PAINLESS BICYCLE RIDING

My daughter approached me one day and asked to be taught to ride her bicycle without the aid of training wheels. I was not aware of any particular method or technique other than running beside the bicycle while holding the back of the seat to prevent her from falling. I remembered seeing an article in Parents magazine and decided to read it. I used the suggested method. My daughter was riding remarkably well without training wheels, falls, scrapes, or bruises in just four days. I would like to share this method with you since it proved to be so successful for us.

Mike Ryan

1. How long would it have taken us to learn to walk as babies if we had had to learn by walking on the side of a two-by-four? We'd still be crawling on our hands and knees, ruining expensive clothes, and having a tough time on the dance floor. Learning to ride a bike on a sidewalk is a little like learning to walk on a two-by-four.

Your kid can't even sit on a bike yet and you're asking him to master the complex art of steering down a narrow strip of cement between the terrifying, forbidden zones of neighbors lawns. Put the bike in the car. Take it and your kid to a school playground or empty church parking lot--someplace where he won't have to worry about steering until he learns how to stay up.

2. Most of us "just learn" how to ride a bike in a single, blazing, inspired moment after a suitable period of bashing our knees on the ground--sometimes for as long as two summers. One moment we can't ride to save our lives. The next moment we can. We know how. But we don't know "the how".

The fact is, there is a real method to riding a bike and the secret is all in the front wheel. Simply put, when you start to fall right, turn the front wheel right and when you start to fall left turn the front wheel left.

This technique we master in our "inspired moment." We think we learned the balance, the feel, of bike riding. What we really learned was a way to stop the tilt of a falling bike by turning the wheel (think of it as sticking your leg out) while at the same time redirecting the momentum of the bike, allowing it to right itself. Of course, in

actual practice, we constantly make these small, front-wheel adjustments --- adjustments so small we don't even notice them.

3. You're in an empty church parking lot. Your kid is on his bike, feet on the pedals, hands on the handlebars. You're holding him up by the back of the bike seat. Next move is don't move---not one puffing, wheezing, sweating inch. Here's where you teach "the how".

Tilt the bike to the right and to the left. Tell your child, "When you start feeling yourself fall this way (right), turn your wheel this way (right). When you start feeling yourself fall this way (left), turn your front wheel this way (left). "Stand there, without moving, for five or ten minutes practicing with your child. Tilt the bike unexpectedly one way and then the other until your child gets the hang of turning the front wheel into tilts.

4. Walk, don't run, with your child. Move slowly. Hold lightly on to the back of his bike seat. The concept of turning the front wheel into a fall is easy to understand. But, there are two things your child will probably do that you should practice here: he will wait until he's tilting too far into the fall before correcting with the front wheel, or he will overcorrect and go right into a fall/correct situation into the opposite direction.

Explain to your child that he wants to correct early. Tilt him very slightly and show him how far to correct with the front wheel. Tilt him a little more and show him how much he'll have to turn the wheel to correct. Show him that if he waits too long, he'll either crash or start losing control in the other direction.

5. You will have to run a little now. But you won't have to do it for long, and even better, you won't have to do it in front of your neighbors.

Run slowly at first. Let your child set the pace. Stay a little back, just out of your child's field of peripheral vision. Hold lightly on to the back of the seat as soon as possible for as long a possible. don't let your child know when you're holding and when you're not. Saying "I'm letting go now" is like saying "Look over your shoulders, son, Panic. And run your bike into that wire fence over there."

Now you'll see why the wide-open spaces are important. Your young novice bicyclist will dip, loop, zigzag, ride in crazy circles. At times it will seem as if your child is in a slow-motion death spiral, when suddenly some invisible hand will push him upright. You'll die a thousand times in the next

fifteen minutes. And, of course, there will be a few crashes, but it won't be long now.

Your child will still be waiting too long before correcting with the front wheel. He'll still overcorrect, too. When the ride gets too crazy, stop him. Give him a breather. Remind him to correct sooner with the front wheel. Then go at it again.

At some point (you'll know when), stop running alongside your youngster and let him go. After 50 or 60 yards he'll realize you're not there. He'll look around--probably crash--but when he sees how far back you are, he'll know he can ride. There's no stopping him after that.

6. Once he's riding, let him ride. He's proud of himself. He still can't believe it. Let him ride, build confidence, and have fun. Help him get on and off the bike. Help him stop. Let him go.

Before you leave, you can show him how to get on the bike--at a stoop or stair if necessary--and how to brake. But don't practice these things now---unless he wants to. He'll pick them up quickly on his on.

Michael Kelly

AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Awards Committee set up at the first of the year to have a Barbecue at the end of each quarter provided there there were no lost time or preventable motor vehicle accidents. This pertains to both Exxon employees as well as contractors. Also Exxon employees were given the choice of either keeping the point system or getting a gift certificate usable at the Permian Mall. Exxon caps were given to both employees and contractors as a safety awareness item. The Awards Committee members are: Wes Clyburn, Sam Young, Chris Linderman, John Jordan.

John Jordan